

ITEMS

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RESEARCH ON STATE POLITICS: A NEW PROGRAM OF GRANTS-IN-AID

A THREE-YEAR PROGRAM of grants-in-aid for research on state politics will be initiated by the Social Science Research Council in the autumn of 1955. The program was formulated by the Council's Committee on Political Behavior,¹ and financial support has been provided by a grant of \$150,000 to the Council from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

For several years the Committee on Political Behavior has been concerned with the development of a more rigorous approach to research in political science. In its discussions particular attention has been given to questions of methodology in the comparative study of different political systems and processes. Up to the present time comparative politics, as a branch of political science, has been largely concerned in the United States with comparisons of the formal political institutions of other countries, especially those of Western Europe. In the opinion of the Committee on Political Behavior, comparative studies of the political institutions and processes of the states of this country have received insufficient attention. In recent years the study of state government has had relatively little financial support, although it offers advantages for the development of comparative methods.

To stimulate wider discussion of the views of the committee, a memorandum entitled "Research in State Politics" was prepared and circulated late in 1954. The memorandum suggests that "Perhaps most theory, in the sense of generalizations about political behavior,

must rest on comparative analysis. Yet the comparative method has fallen short of its potentialities," not because of "the character of the method but the manner of its application." The memorandum outlines a number of topics in the field of state government on which the committee believes that the findings of future research could be additive and might ultimately yield "propositions of considerable generality." The following topics are suggested as especially appropriate for comparative study:

- Legislative roles: patterns of "training" and "promotion"
- Formal and informal legislative organization
- Recruitment of candidates and party organization
- Patterns of activity of interest groups
- Clientele relations in administrative structures
- Variations in gubernatorial role.

The memorandum warns that in comparative studies there must be keen sensitivity to certain basic variations in the fundamental structure of individual states:

"The concept of the state in the American federal system can be a somewhat deceptive and illusive abstraction. . . . In degrees differing from state to state, the workings of state politics are conditioned by the fact that the state is not an autonomous political unit or by the fact that it is not a unit of community.

". . . State boundaries were to start with, or have become, arbitrary and accidental, not organic or functional. With federal control of citizenship, free movement of people and goods across state lines, federal control of fiscal and monetary policy, the states have not become units of community. . . . A state can remain dependent on, auxiliary to, a market center and perhaps

¹ The members of this committee are David B. Truman, Columbia University (chairman); Conrad M. Arensberg, Columbia University; Angus Campbell, University of Michigan; Oliver Garceau, Bennington College; Alexander Heard, University of North Carolina; V. O. Key, Harvard University; Avery Leiserson, Vanderbilt University; and M. Brewster Smith, Social Science Research Council.

much more remotely a metropolitan center, beyond its own borders. Pieces of a state can belong to different neighboring states in all but state politics. . . .

"It can be said on the positive side for the comparative study of state politics, that there is substantial uniformity of institutional framework. There is, further, a considerable cultural homogeneity . . . There is, finally, a minimum common denominator in state political activity: office seeking, patronage, privilege seeking with respect to policy. . . .

"Given the paucity of theory, comparative work in this field will probably have to proceed on the basis of some very simple, crude propositions of a broadly functional character . . . For example, in a community of broad and substantial consensus, where many citizens feel secure in indulging their apathy, there is a functional comparability between the minority party in two-party states, the minority faction in some one-party states, the activity of certain constellations of interest groups in still other states. These several institutional forms and party structures may serve a common function as a vehicle of sporadic protest against those entrenched in office. . . .

"The design of research in comparative state politics is a problem of selecting data and organizing them in such a way as to slice through broad segments of political activity. In so doing, it is possible to see particular activities as parts of a larger pattern of action and to develop concepts along functional lines that can be put to the test of further research. Yet the areas of activity that can be identified in relationship to total situations are so few and so hazy that it is not appropriate to require as a basis for research design a refined working theory, a clear identification of independent and dependent variables, a polished taxonomy."

In addition to discussing and selecting six specific topics for comparative studies, the committee's memorandum makes the following suggestion:

"A part of the work that needs doing, by methods still less precise than those appropriate to the topics suggested above, is the broad description of the politics of the various states. This would include the topography of party strength, organization, and faction; relations of governor and legislature; inventory of pressure groups, their reputed activity, influence, and techniques of access. These remain the major factors of our concept of American politics. It is evident that there are pitfalls waiting for those who merely accumulate data. But the evidential basis for insights into political process remains inadequate. A group of political scientists of the present generation, when discussing research design in political behavior, will worry a good deal about method, about the correct language to borrow from other dis-

ciplines, and may even be concerned with problems of statistics. But when they talk about political behavior, they unfailingly drift into highly anecdotal argument based on the random and limited contacts they have individually had directly or vicariously with politics. From this narrow base of evidence they must construct admittedly tentative working hypotheses. These correctly remain tentative, but they lack the range of contact with the major phenomena needed to make such hypotheses fit progressively more closely the raw material of political life."

The committee's memorandum was sent to a large number of political scientists. An accompanying letter requested comments, and inquired whether the recipient would be interested in preparing specific research proposals within the broad area outlined in the memorandum. The number and quality of the responses received convinced the committee that substantial support for a research program in this area should be sought. When favorable action by the Council and the Carnegie Corporation gave assurance of such support for three years, the committee arranged a conference with a group of those scholars who had presented research proposals.

The objectives of this conference, which was held in New York on June 29-30, were to facilitate an exchange of views among the proponents of research; to ascertain the extent of their common interests and common purpose; and to gain the benefit of their advice on the development of the committee's program. On the basis of the discussion the committee concluded that it should not encourage or suggest the desirability of designing research to cover all the states or even a large number of them; and it should not design or execute a comprehensive research program under its own auspices. Because the committee is not concerned with coverage, but with the stimulation of research and with attracting scholars to undertake significant lines of inquiry, it was decided to establish a program of grants-in-aid of research, in order to build upon the existing research interests of individuals and to develop collaboration among investigators who have parallel or convergent interests or research plans.

Under this program applications from individuals will be reviewed by the Committee on Political Behavior, which will give particular attention to the ability of the applicant to formulate research plans and indicate methods appropriate for their execution, and to the extent to which these may be related to the interests and plans of other workers. It is not the intention of the committee, under this program, to encourage the organization of research teams as such; applications initiated by or on behalf of groups will ordinarily not be considered for grants. Although the committee will not pre-

pare research plans or direct research projects, it will be glad to inform individuals concerning the relevant interests of other scholars, and to assist them in communicating with each other concerning research plans and procedures. It is hoped that in this way comparability of research findings may be achieved.

Preference will be given to applications that offer most promise of comparability with the plans of other applicants. Some applications of course will not immediately attract the interest of a research worker in another state. If such an application deals with a topic within the concern of the committee, and if its substance or method promises to stimulate comparable research by others, it may receive favorable consideration by the committee, even though its element of comparability lies in its prospects for later repetition by others.

The following points are noted for the guidance of those who may be interested in applying for grants-in-aid of research on state politics:

(1) The committee has expressed a sympathetic interest in the development of plans for introducing common elements into studies of the legislative process in several states. A limited number of projects on this subject may be considered for grants.

(2) It has been suggested that patterns of recruitment of political personnel in state government might well be

studied. If studies in this field should identify patterns of recruitment of political, as distinct from administrative, personnel, attempts might be made both to account for differences among the states and to estimate their consequences in terms of political structures and processes.

(3) The committee will be particularly interested in receiving proposals for research on state politics that are related to the approach discussed in its memorandum, copies of which will be supplied upon request.

(4) The committee will be glad to give consideration to proposals for comparative research on other aspects of state government not specifically mentioned above.

Grants will be offered to individuals possessing the Ph.D. degree or its equivalent. No maximum has yet been stipulated for these grants, but awards may be made both for research expenses and for maintenance. In general, the maximum will probably be the equivalent of salary for not more than 12 months, although it will not be essential that a single period be involved. For example, a grant might be made for research during two summers and for one intervening or succeeding semester.

Application forms may be obtained from the Washington office of the Council, 726 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Applications should be received by this office not later than January 9, 1956.

THE CONFERENCE ON CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

by M. Brewster Smith

PERSONALITY in society and culture as an area of research has long been of interest to the Council. Its Committee on Personality and Culture, maintained from 1930 to 1940, effectively stimulated a wide range of research in the field. More recent developments have emphasized two related but distinguishable interests, and each has received Council attention:

(1) The Committee on Social Relations Aspects of International Tensions, 1948-50, was particularly concerned with research on "national character," sometimes called "modal" or "basic" personality, which had been given impetus by wartime needs.¹ In this area a psychological interpretation of the patterned coherence of national cultures has typically been sought, and psycho-

¹ The status of research on this provocative but methodologically treacherous area was reviewed for the committee by Otto Klineberg in *Tensions Affecting International Understanding*, Council Bulletin 62, 1950.

analysis has often been drawn on for hypotheses about the influence of distinctive ways of child rearing.

(2) The newer interest looks to the natural laboratory provided by the diverse cultures of the world for opportunities to test theoretical propositions concerning socio-cultural influences on personality development. In research on national character the primary aim is to understand a culture, and hypotheses from psychology and psychoanalysis are used to interpret cultural data; the newer focus is on putting such hypotheses to explicit cross-cultural test. This was the approach of the Subcommittee on Child Development of the Committee on Social Behavior in planning and initiating research on child rearing and personality development in five cultures, for which independent support was obtained and field work has now been completed under the direction of John W. M. Whiting of Harvard University, Irvin L.

Child of Yale University, and William W. Lambert of Cornell University.

The Committee on Personality Development² was appointed in June 1954 to continue the former subcommittee's effort to advance cross-cultural research on the consequences of child rearing, and to give attention also to other lines of causation in the interplay of social, cultural, and personality factors in socialization. As a first step toward stimulating collaborative research in this broader area, it was considered important to share the committee's interest with university research centers that had not been involved in the earlier studies. A conference on cross-cultural research on personality development was consequently planned by the committee and held in Kansas City on May 20-22. In addition to the members and staff of the committee, the participants included 14 anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists from 13 universities.³

To communicate the committee's perspective and raise issues for discussion at the conference, the following working papers were prepared according to mutually established plans, and circulated to all participants well before the conference: "The Social System and Socialization," David F. Aberle; "The Psychological Processes Underlying Behavioral Uniformity," Alfred L. Baldwin; "A Design for Cross-Cultural Research on Personality Development," John W. M. Whiting; "Transcultural Variables," Robert R. Sears; "Defense Mechanisms and Personality," Daniel R. Miller; and "Psychological Tests in Cross-Cultural Research," William E. Henry. The first two morning sessions were each devoted to initial consideration of three papers, leaving the afternoons free for discussion of wider issues suggested by the papers, and of relevant current research by participants. The final day was reserved for consideration of points emerging from earlier discussions, and for exploration of ways of developing the committee's program.

After some expected difficulties in interdisciplinary communication had been partially overcome, there was a lively exchange of views, which was later deemed to have been valuable in sharply raising issues of common

² The members of the committee are Alfred L. Baldwin, Cornell University (chairman); David F. Aberle and Daniel R. Miller, University of Michigan; William E. Henry, University of Chicago; Robert R. Sears, Stanford University; John W. M. Whiting, Harvard University; staff, M. Brewster Smith.

³ These participants were: John W. Atkinson, University of Michigan; Edward M. Bruner, Yale University; Edward C. Devereux, Jr., Cornell University; John J. Honigmann, University of North Carolina; Bradford B. Hudson, Rice Institute; Richard A. Littman and Theodore Stern, University of Oregon; David G. Mandelbaum, University of California; Paul H. Mussen, Ohio State University; Kaspar D. Naegle, University of British Columbia; George D. Spindler, Stanford University; Melford E. Spiro, University of Connecticut; Anthony F. C. Wallace, University of Pennsylvania; and Beatrice B. Whiting, Harvard University.

concern and helping to clarify them. Neither an adequate summary of the wide-ranging discussion nor a digest of the closely argued papers is possible here, but it is hoped that selected comments will convey some sense of the shared concern with important problems that was an impressive if intangible outcome of the conference. The members of the committee are revising their papers in the light of the conference discussion for possible publication in 1956.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIALIZATION

According to one view, which has become almost conventional, the relationship between personality and culture is a circular one: In stable societies, so the explanation goes, children are raised in such a way that when they in turn become parents, they are predisposed by personality to treat their children likewise, with similar results *ad infinitum*. This conception of a self-contained relationship between child-rearing practices and personality is plausible as far as it goes and a corrective to even more simplistic accounts, but is too encapsulated to be constructively used in causal analysis. Aberle's paper suggested an escape from the restrictions imposed by this view. He drew attention to a group of problems which have been little emphasized: patterns of child rearing as consequences of various features of a society as well as expressions of adult modal personality in the culture. Matrilineal kinship systems, for example, show a distribution of functions among the *agents* of socialization—parents, uncles, aunts, etc.—different from the distribution in patrilineal systems. Different types and systems of economic roles obviously affect patterns of child care and training, as by keeping a working mother in field or factory, or by determining that a child will be inducted early and progressively into adult roles because his work is economically valuable. Aberle's survey of possible relationships between characteristics and requirements of a social system and the socialization practices associated with it pointed to a promising area for research by anthropologists and sociologists. The relevance of social structure, which he placed before the conference, was a recurrent theme in ensuing discussions.

Another strategy for disentangling the complex interrelations of parental practices and personality development was noted in discussion, namely, intensive historical study of socialization under conditions of social change or acculturation. Conference participants who had contributed to this kind of research in nonliterate societies recognized that to establish the historical facts for modern America is no simple matter. No one knows to what extent parental practices have actually followed the changing fashions portrayed in the manuals of child

care; but bits of evidence were cited by participants to support the plausible assumption that the extent of secular change in modal parental behavior may have been less marked than the sharp oscillations so notable in the advice of the "experts."

MEDIATING PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Baldwin explored the psychological bases of the uniformities in the behavior of the individual that underlie the patterned relationships described as social structure by sociologists or anthropologists. Attempting to forge a link between sociological and psychological theory, Baldwin asked the more general question: On what types of psychological processes do behavioral uniformities depend? Conceptual analysis of these processes provides the necessary foundation for two other questions that were only touched upon by the conference: Under what conditions does the child learn to regulate his behavior by one or another mechanism; and what are the social consequences of each psychological type of behavioral uniformity?

Baldwin's approach derived from a fourfold classification in terms of whether the observed uniformity is due to compliance with a social rule, on the one hand, and whether the uniformity is instrumental to the pursuit of some goal, on the other. Behavior instigated by rules has the advantage of providing a highly flexible basis for social control, although it has liabilities in potential individual resistance or *pro forma* compliance. Uniformity of motives or preferences, an example of consummatory—not instrumental—behavior psychologically independent of rules, may be expected to be relatively permanent but inflexible. Uniformities in different sorts of behavior may typically be differently mediated in any single society; an interesting problem for cross-cultural research is the extent to which systematic differences occur between societies as well.

As Baldwin pointed out, uniform behavior of each of these types presumably involves both environmental cues and personal predispositions. How these predispositions are acquired in the course of personality development is a question for psychological research important for understanding the interrelations of personality, culture, and society.

TRANSCULTURAL VARIABLES

If cross-cultural research is to contribute to systematic comparative analysis of these problems, it is essential to formulate transcultural variables in terms such that motivational systems and their environmental determinants can be described. The view that this task is im-

possible—that cultures and personalities are uniquely patterned systems that can appropriately be described only in their own terms—was not in evidence at the conference, although it is shared by some anthropologists and psychologists, and any attempt to achieve a social science of cross-cultural validity must cope with this problem.

According to the paper by Sears, the central problem concerns the attainment of *conceptual equivalence* across cultural boundaries. With some social phenomena, such equivalence is relatively easy to attain. Kinship organization, for example, elaborated as it is around a limited set of biological and social distinctions, has lent itself readily to cross-cultural comparison.⁴ Terms like "mother's brother" and "matrilineal" have specific meaning when applied in diverse cultural contexts. But the predicament facing a psychologist concerned, say, with the determinants of aggressive motivation in cross-cultural perspective is not so simple. Personality theory based on studies in Western culture is still too primitive to provide conceptual definitions for an array of terms like aggression with which to describe personality for theoretical purposes. If one chooses, with Sears, to define aggression in terms of motivation to injure an organism, one faces the complex task of identifying the behaviors, differing from person to person and from culture to culture, from which such an underlying common motive can legitimately be inferred. A still more difficult task faces the investigator who wishes to employ quantitative tests of relationship: to place aggressive behavior characteristic of an individual or of a social group upon a common scale. The conference recognized that this methodological problem also arises in comparisons of individuals, but is particularly great in cross-cultural research.

In the opinion of anthropologists at the conference, the success of field workers in establishing communication and practical interpersonal understanding with foreign peoples suggests that there are tacit common denominators of human response which, if they could be made explicit, would help to solve these problems. Thus the urgent and difficult task is explicit formulation of such variables. Sears suggested some general guides for identifying personality variables that promise to be transcultural. One such guide would be the universal presence of the kinds of situations in which a particular disposition can be learned. Dependency, for example, would seem to have roots in the universality of physical inadequacy in infancy. The ultimate criterion of success in the formulation of transcultural variables, it was generally agreed, lies in the extent to which their

⁴ Cf. "Matrilineal Descent Systems: A Preliminary Statement about the Summer Seminar," *Items*, March 1955, pp. 5-8.

application to cross-cultural data yields antecedent-consequent relationships that are theoretically coherent. That is, the identification and operational specification of variables are inseparable aspects of the development of theory and its extension and revision in the research process.

It was observed that, in posing the problems of conceptual equivalence with inescapable sharpness, cross-cultural research imposes a healthy discipline on the investigator and forces him to conceptualize explicitly. He cannot rely on the "same" operations or measures in different cultures: a smile, an insult, a gift may have quite different implications in each. He must understand the meaning of his measurements. In the light of the conference discussion, "operational equivalence" in the absence of conceptual equivalence yields worthless data.

Miller's review of a program of research on psychological defense mechanisms, involving American subjects of different class subcultures, provided a concrete illustration of variables whose transcultural status is problematic. That the classic mechanisms identified by psychoanalysts—repression, displacement, isolation, etc.—may fall short of meeting the requirements of cross-cultural research is suggested by ethnological evidence of novel patterns of defense and psychopathology that are unrepresented in Western psychiatric literature. An analysis of possible defensive maneuvers in terms of several more abstract and possibly more general dimensions, such as Miller's paper provided, appears promising for cross-cultural research.

PROBLEMS OF METHOD

The experimental studies of defense mechanisms described by Miller illustrated an approach to personality measurement that was new to many participants. Rather than relying on all-purpose projective instruments, such as the Thematic Apperception Test or the Rorschach inkblots, the research group directed by Miller and Guy E. Swanson developed specific measures of their focal variables, selecting indices that had been shown to be sensitive to the presence of a motivational state induced by experimental intervention. While Miller was not yet ready to offer these techniques for the cross-cultural study of defense mechanisms, the greater power and efficiency of such specific measures seemed to recommend the approach for field research.

Studies of culture and personality have relied heavily on the two projective tests just mentioned. Henry's paper, a friendly critique of projective testing in this area, was particularly critical of a not infrequent practice of anthropologists—the collection of a set of TAT or Rorschach protocols rather as an afterthought to field

work, and their submission by mail to a psychological "expert" for blind interpretation. While stimulating insights have resulted, much closer collaboration between psychologist and anthropologist, especially in planning to obtain relevant data, seemed eminently desirable. Such collaborative planning may involve designing or selecting a technique to fit the research problem, as in Miller's research, or simply deciding on the more relevant scoring categories. Since the interpretation of projective tests by psychologists is likely to be in the psychopathological frame of reference associated with their origin in the clinic, customary categories of interpretation may not be relevant in research on normal personality development.

The pros and cons of "blind" scoring and interpretation of projective test materials—a tactic intended to avoid contamination of the data by extraneous assumptions or information about the tested group—evoked considerable comment. It was agreed that the aspects about which the interpreter should be kept ignorant depend on the research problem; in general, scoring categories should be determined with maximum collaboration between anthropologist and psychologist, and the scoring should be done under conditions safeguarding the independence of the test data.

The more fundamental issue of the respective merits and liabilities of projective test data and data obtained by systematic behavioral observation was raised in discussion of Whiting's paper. The argument that data on underlying motivation are needed in order to understand overt behavior was met with the objection that projective tests do not necessarily provide direct measures of motive, but merely a different stimulus situation in which to observe behavior. Recent research has shown that the relations between fantasy and more consequential behavior are more complex than is often assumed in rule-of-thumb test interpretation, and should be empirically investigated. Unless the theoretical problem under study explicitly calls for fantasy measures, it was cautioned, sound economy of effort might give higher priority to observation of behavior.

Whiting and Baldwin described the plan for observing representative samples of behavior in the five-culture study of child rearing, on which field work was then nearing completion. This plan calls for a systematic sampling of behavior settings as well as of times in the daily routine; the situational instigation of the behavior is in a sense the key. All behavior, aggressive or not, is recorded in a situation that normally instigates aggression. The absence of aggressive behavior in a provoking situation is as relevant as its presence. While the plan agreed upon was proving exceedingly arduous to execute, and numerous difficulties had to be

resolved by compromise, it was thought that the explicit attention being given to the social context of behavior should yield data of unusual relevance to the impact of social structure as defined by Aberle.

A different methodological issue concerns the quantitative manipulation of cross-cultural data to test hypotheses and to establish relationships. For some purposes it is convenient to correlate the modal or average values assigned to each cultural group for the variables under investigation. However, since each culture contributes only one case to the analysis, even when ratings or other measures are available it is difficult to build up a large enough sample to demonstrate any but the grossest of relationships. Whiting's paper proposed a compromise solution, in which the severely limited data on modal behavior would be supplemented for each culture by an analysis of the covariation of individual differences for the same variables. Where both sets of data reveal the same relationship, as was true of illustrative data presented on age of weaning and ensuing emotional disturbance, the findings are particularly convincing. Where divergent results are obtained, the problem is thereby sharpened for subsequent investigation. The discussion indicated that this compromise strategy poses a dilemma in regard to the selection of cultural groups for investigation. Relatively homogeneous groups, with high "behavioral uniformity," would be ideal from the standpoint of yielding well-distributed representative and stable modal values, while for correlation of intracultural individual differences heterogeneous groups would be preferable.

CONCLUSION

The conference repeatedly expressed the need for a general theoretical model comprehending the relation-

ships of society, culture, and developing personality. Suggestions were made concerning the features that such a model should possess, but it was obvious that no satisfactory model was likely to be constructed by any conference group. Helpful as such a model would be in identifying the variables worthy of research, construction of the model itself can only take place gradually, by successive approximation, in the research process.

The conference believed that positive steps could be taken toward this objective. One step, to which the conference itself was regarded as a contribution, would be the planning of limited studies—whether by anthropologists, sociologists, or psychologists—giving more sophisticated attention to possible points of articulation between different levels of analysis. While disciplinary specialization of interest was considered desirable, a greater degree of joint attention to such problems as the relation of social structure to socialization seemed in order.

The problem of research planning, however, resolves into one of training; it is increasingly necessary for specialists in the sciences concerned with personality development to share one another's theoretical perspectives. The conference showed this to be true even with respect to research techniques. Several participants thought it paradoxical, for example, that the staunchest supporters of the standard projective techniques were anthropologists, not psychologists.

The various specific suggestions made by the conference will be given further consideration by the Committee on Personality Development. It invites correspondence in regard to research developments and plans in its area of interest. Correspondence should be addressed to the committee's chairman, Alfred L. Baldwin, Department of Child Development and Family Relationships, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

RESEARCH ON THE BEHAVIOR OF SMALL GROUPS: REPORT ON THE MONTEREY CONFERENCE

by Allan Katcher

THE study of small group behavior has attracted increasing attention among research workers in a number of social science fields. Common interests which are frequently linked to the "small group" are beginning to give an interdisciplinary character to such topics as interaction, personal influence, communication, morale, and leadership. In view of the present state of research planning and activity on these topics, a group on the

Pacific Coast proposed that the Council sponsor a conference to afford a general exchange of information about work in progress and to examine possible leads toward new avenues of exploration. With the approval of the Committee on Problems and Policy, plans for the conference were developed with these objectives in mind, and the meetings were subsequently held in Monterey, California, April 24-26, 1955.

The participants in the conference included 29 psychologists, 14 sociologists, and a representative from each of the following fields: psychiatry, speech, public health, administration, and social work. The participants came from the following institutions and agencies: University of California, Lewis and Clark College, Los Angeles State College, University of Michigan, Stanford University, State College of Washington, University of Washington, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, RAND Corporation, U. S. Air Force Survival Research Field Unit, U. S. Army Field Forces Human Research Unit No. 2 of the Human Resources Research Office, U. S. Office of Naval Research, Naval Personnel Research Field Activity, Naval Retraining Command, and the Seattle Public Schools.

Since large meetings frequently restrict open discussion, the agenda was planned with the purpose of encouraging as much individual participation as possible. The conference procedure included division into small discussion groups, rotation of their membership after each major phase of the program, and "feedback" sessions in which each group presented a summary of its discussion to the entire conference. Prior to the conference, discussion leaders were supplied with copies of the formal papers. On the third day, groups were organized on the basis of individual choice. At the last session, involving all participants, Dorwin Cartwright led a general discussion based on his observation and assessment of the meetings.

Since this procedure departed from the usual conference pattern, a few comments on its operation may be of interest. In general, the informal group sessions were well received. Although some members expressed preferences for maintaining a constant group membership, many participants remarked that the groups provided more varied and intimate contacts than in most conferences of similar size and scope. Regrettably, the cohesive and informative functions that feedback sessions were intended to serve were not fulfilled, and many participants found them inadequate.

Problems arising from interdisciplinary blockages were not at all in evidence. Communication was effective, and differences in points of view were not determined by discipline. Interest in particular topics was of major importance, and save for certain terminological characteristics it was difficult to identify the professional fields of speakers.

Because of the number and range of topics covered, no attempt will be made here to summarize the individual papers; rather, the summary will be directed to several prominent issues that arose at various points in the program. Transcriptions, notes, and the survey by Cartwright provide the basis for the following remarks.

CONVERGING TRENDS IN SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

The conference opened with a paper, by Allan Katchner and S. Frank Miyamoto, reviewing the sociopsychological trends that have led to the convergence of interest in research on small groups. This survey revealed that the small group does not constitute a distinct subject for study, at least not a phenomenon with distinctive characteristics. On the contrary, it was suggested that the widespread interest in research on small groups is attributable to the fact that they are convenient for investigating many psychological and sociological problems. The conference discussion seemed to substantiate this thesis—studies of small groups conducted by the participants had involved bomber crews, sonar detection teams, informal discussion groups, families, university classes, therapy groups, and other types, varying in size from 2 to 150 persons.

It was indicated that the unique qualities of the small group are its limited membership, the typically face-to-face character of relationships, and the restricted opportunity to evolve elaborate divisions of labor. Whether these three conditions suffice to produce a distinctive type of group phenomenon was not discussed since initial skirmishes with the definitional problem of a small group led to no unanimity of opinion among participants. In general, research workers have shown little interest in limiting their studies by the considerations mentioned.

It was argued, further, that small group research is not a unified area of inquiry, except among students of special cases such as the primary or "psyche" group; and members were warned against making easy assumptions about the interrelatedness of small group studies and the comparability of research findings. The need for theoretical direction to produce conceptual order was emphasized, and much of the later discussion dealt with the necessity for theoretical models, the nature of the development of theory, and differences between psychological and sociological models in accounting for the behavior of small groups.

There was, however, considerable disagreement as to what constitutes theory, as well as skepticism about the possibility of a general theory of small groups, especially in view of the varied and disparate topics under investigation. Several expressed the view that methodological problems are currently much more important than theoretical issues. Perhaps, as Henry Maas commented, the conference could have discussed more profitably the conceptual tools employed in each specific study, rather than devoting so much time to general discussions of theory. Theoretical discussions, as such, may require a

more adequate base of research findings in order to be effective in the guidance of further work.

METHODOLOGY

The empirical orientation of many participants naturally encouraged reports on research in progress, comparisons of techniques employed on similar problems, and discussion of limitations associated with present methods. In several instances attention was directed to the development of multiple-criterion measures of effective group performance, as in the activities associated with sonar detection. In other cases the chief concern was with individuals, since it has been found that overall efficiency can be best predicted from the assessment of an individual's performance, with little reference to group morale as an essential influence.

Many investigators were concerned with the effect of research procedures upon group behavior, and a paper by Raymond Bernberg attempted to deal with this problem. Using still photographs of groups in action, group members were asked to describe the events taking place in the pictures. On the basis of the projective material collated, Bernberg believes this technique can be useful: individual reports by the members can be obtained without interfering with the normal processes of the group. Further work is needed to determine the applicability of this technique.

LABORATORY AND FIELD RESEARCH

The general problem of proper research strategy—what should be done in the laboratory and in the field—received much attention.¹ Edward Gross reminded participants that the research situation itself is a social one. He reviewed a number of attendant methodological problems, such as attitudes of groups toward investigators, the effect of dissembling on subjects' behavior, effects of participant observers, and other general problems of rapport between experimenter and subjects. Descriptions of experimental conditions should include some analysis of the larger social structure in which the small group functions, the demands and expectations of that structure, and the position of the small group within it. Both Gross and Launor Carter emphasized the limits in the experimental manipulability of relevant variables, especially in problems in real life.

Carter suggested that the laboratory is basically inadequate for testing any comprehensive social theory, for the following reasons: (1) The kind of theory which can be tested is extremely limited in scope and confined to

a very few relevant variables in any natural ongoing situation. (2) The control that is supposed to overcome the difficulty of dealing with only a few variables at a time is essentially illusory, in the sense that when control is exercised the experimental situation is made too artificial. (3) Motivational conditions in real life are frequently quite different from laboratory conditions. (4) Replication in the field is often impossible. While Carter recognized the equally obvious limitations of field research, he pleaded for less concern with scientific "respectability" in the formal sense, and greater recognition of specific practical issues.

John Kennedy's paper suggested a compromise between contrasting views about laboratory versus field research, and incidentally introduced a useful terminological distinction. From an analogous engineering viewpoint, he proposed that the small group should be referred to as a "component." The engineer is accustomed to asking two kinds of questions about components: (1) those about the performance of a component when it is isolated from a system, and (2) those concerning performance of components when they are tied together in a larger interacting system. Since predictions made on the basis of test results in the laboratory (component in isolation) often do not tell them how the same component will behave in the field (component as part of an interacting system), engineers conduct an elaborate set of tests in both environments before they are willing to make predictions about performance of a particular system design in the field. What may be familiarly recognized as the wind-tunnel was referred to by Kennedy as a "transitional model." In this, attempts are made to replicate the relevant field variables, but to retain control over the variation of essential factors. Kennedy described the use of a transitional model in a psychological study of radar crews.

GENERAL EVALUATION AND FUTURE STEPS

The participants were largely preoccupied with the problems, difficulties, and disadvantages of research on small groups. In his summary, however, Cartwright emphasized that participants had tended to lose historical perspective and to forget that the area is a relatively new one. Some of the best studies, he emphasized, were made only fifteen or twenty years ago. In addition, Cartwright thought that relatively more effort was expended in discussing the strategy of research and, except for the final session, not enough was devoted to the personal interests of research workers. He noted that both military and academic investigators experience certain disadvantages in research. The former may work under some restrictions with respect to their choice of problems, and the

¹ Cf. "Narrowing the Gap between Field Studies and Laboratory Experiments in Social Psychology: A Statement by the Summer Seminar," *Items*, December 1954, pp. 37-42.

latter may lack the advantages of field studies in checking generalizations from the laboratory. He expressed some concern about the premature standardization of methods and techniques, believing that methodologies are still too traditional and that more effort should be expended on devising and trying out new approaches. In the past fifteen years some progress has been made in identifying the crucial problems; future effort should yield greater results in the development of theory.

It was apparent that further meetings would be helpful in maintaining communication among research workers and providing for the exchange of ideas. The literature in this field is already vast and growing at a prodigious rate. Conference participants emphasized the need for more economical reporting of research, and suggested that fewer articles should be written

per study. In addition to conferences, other methods should be utilized to aid communication. One problem involves the great amount of significant research that is being done in military organizations and that is inaccessible to most investigators. Considering the present status of the field, it was recommended that systematic codifications of the literature should be undertaken with a view toward theoretical integration. To take account of the obvious overlap of interests in psychology and sociology, such surveys should be interdisciplinary in nature.

Before the conference adjourned tentative plans were made to hold a similar meeting next year under independent auspices. Without neglecting the assessment of theoretical significance, this conference will be organized chiefly around discussions of current empirical research.

COMMITTEE BRIEFS

CENSUS MONOGRAPHS

Ralph G. Hurlin (chairman), Robert W. Burgess, John D. Durand, Ernest M. Fisher, F. F. Hill, Frederick F. Stephan, Conrad Taeuber, Ralph J. Watkins, Paul Webbink.

The second of the monographs sponsored by the committee and the Bureau of the Census, *Income of the American People* by Herman Miller, was published by John Wiley & Sons in August. The first monograph, *American Agriculture: Its Structure and Place in the Economy* by Ronald L. Mighell, appeared in April. Currently in press are monographs on the foreign born by Edward P. Hutchinson, and on social characteristics of urban and rural communities by Otis Dudley Duncan and Albert J. Reiss, Jr. Most of the remaining monographs are expected to be substantially completed by the end of December.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Gabriel A. Almond (chairman), Raymond A. Bauer, Taylor Cole, James S. Coleman, George McT. Kahin, Roy C. Macridis, Guy J. Pauker, Lucian W. Pye; staff: Bryce Wood.

Two memoranda prepared for the committee by informal subcommittees are scheduled for discussion by panels at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in September: a memorandum on suggestions for comparative research on political processes in non-Western countries, prepared by Messrs. Kahin, Pauker, and Pye and revised with the aid of the committee; and a memorandum on the study of comparative politics in Western Europe, prepared by Messrs. Almond, Cole, and Macridis.

A conference on comparative methods in the study of politics was held at Princeton University on June 2-4 under the joint auspices of the committee and the Committee on Political Behavior; 30 persons participated. The following

papers were prepared for the conference: "Social Theory and Comparative Politics," by Francis X. Sutton, Ford Foundation; "British and American Parties," by Samuel H. Beer, Harvard University; "Pressure Groups in France and the United States," by Henry W. Ehrmann, University of Colorado; "Local Government Institutions in Japan with Comparisons to Their French Counterparts," by Kurt Steiner, Princeton University; and "Comparative Political Systems," by the chairman of the committee. In addition, Edward Suchman of Cornell University and Stein Rokkan of the Institute of Social Research, Oslo, discussed comparative methods in the social sciences. The attention of the conference was focused on extension of the scope of comparative politics, as traditionally conceived, to the informal aspects of political processes that had not previously been studied comparatively, and on the ways in which concepts and methods developed in other social science disciplines might contribute to such study.

PACIFIC COAST COMMITTEE

ON SOCIAL STATISTICS

Calvin F. Schmid (chairman), Genevieve W. Carter, Maurice I. Gershenson, Emily H. Huntington, George M. Kuznets, Walter T. Martin, Davis McEntire, Lincoln E. Moses.

A conference on statistics of labor-management relations was held at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, California, May 12-13, 1955, under joint sponsorship of the committee and the University of California Institute of Industrial Relations. Sixteen papers were presented on the statistics of union membership, work stoppage and mediation statistics, the statistics of health and welfare programs, analysis of contract provisions, and statistical problems in measuring employer expenditures for wage supplements. The participants at the conference included, in addition to the committee, dele-

gates from the industrial relations institutes that were represented on the former Pacific Coast Committee on Labor Market Research, representatives of labor unions and of employers' organizations, and of state and federal bureaus of labor statistics.

H. E. J.

RESEARCH TRAINING

Everett C. Hughes (chairman), G. Heberton Evans, Jr., Henry W. Riecken, Evon Z. Vogt, Payson S. Wild; staff, Elbridge Sibley.

Plans are being developed for four research training institutes to be held in the summer of 1956 under the program announced in *Items*, June 1954, pages 17-18. An institute on quantitative methods of research in agricultural economics will be held at North Carolina State College under the guidance of W. W. McPherson, Earl O. Heady, and Herman M. Southworth, a subcommittee of the Committee on Agricultural Economics, as approved by the Committee on Problems and Policy last spring. The other three institutes were approved upon the recommendation of the Com-

mittee on Research Training, which held its first meeting in May: (1) an institute on population studies, to be held in Washington under the auspices of the American University and with the guidance of an advisory group including Frank Lorimer, Conrad Taeuber, and Margaret J. Hagoon; (2) an institute on survey methods in research on health problems, to be held at the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago under the direction of Clyde W. Hart; and (3) an institute on law and social relations, which will probably be held at the Harvard Law School and will be planned by a group under the chairmanship of E. Adamson Hoebel. Details concerning the proposed institutes, including application procedures, will be announced by the Council in the autumn. Whether a particular institute will actually be held will depend of course upon the number and qualifications of applicants for admission. Suggestions for possible institutes to be held in 1957 will be considered by the committee during the coming winter, as will the possibility of renewed Council study of current trends and problems in graduate departments of social science.

PERSONNEL

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STIPENDS

The Committee on Undergraduate Research Training—E. Adamson Hoebel (chairman), R. F. Arragon, Robert B. MacLeod, Wilbert J. McKeachie, Albert J. Reiss, Jr., and Everett K. Wilson—at a meeting on May 20 voted to award 16 additional undergraduate research stipends for the summer of 1955. Thus, with the 40 stipends granted in March and announced in the June *Items*, 56 undergraduates will have opportunity to do supervised research in social science before the beginning of their senior year. The 16 new appointees, their faculty supervisors, institutions, and research topics are listed below:

Clopper Almon, Jr.; supervisors, William H. Nicholls, Professor of Economics, and E. J. Eberling, Professor of Economics, Vanderbilt University; characteristics of industrial workers in a Tennessee community.

David E. Berlew; supervisors, David C. McClelland, Professor of Psychology, and Norman O. Brown, Associate Professor of Classics, Wesleyan University; desire for achievement as reflected in ancient Greek and Roman literature.

Dana Bramel; supervisor, Howard Jolly, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Reed College; relations of group membership to self-perception.

William Dessaint; supervisors, Robert Spencer, Professor of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, and Mirko Barjaktarovic, Docent, Ethnological Seminar, Belgrade, Yugoslavia; group contacts in the market in a Yugoslavian town.

John A. Dunn, Jr.; supervisor, David C. McClelland, Professor of Psychology, Wesleyan University; desire for achievement as reflected in French literature.

Charles L. Edson; supervisors, V. O. Key, Professor of Government, Harvard University, and David Salmon, Associate Professor of Political Science, Washington University; change in residence from central city to suburbs as a factor in voting behavior.

Franklin M. Fisher; supervisor, Carl Kaysen, Assistant Professor of Economics, Harvard University; investigation of business cycle theories through the construction of stochastic models.

Stanley S. Guterman; supervisor, C. Herman Pritchett, Chairman, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago; civil liberties and the operation of the Illinois Mental Health Code in Cook County.

Nancy L. Kinney; supervisor, Robert M. Guion, Instructor, Department of Psychology, Bowling Green State University; relations between job satisfaction and perceived status in informal organizations.

Daryl A. Maslow; supervisor, Nelly S. Hoyt, Assistant Professor of History, Smith College; eighteenth century origins of the science of anthropology, with evaluation of contributions of the French *Philosophes*.

Oliver C. Moles, Jr.; supervisors, Donald P. Irish, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Russell E. Bayliff, Professor of Sociology, and Earle E. Warner, Professor of Political Science, Ohio Wesleyan University; attitudes of voters toward a controversial municipal official.

John H. Niedercorn; supervisor, James Tobin, Associate Professor of Economics, Yale University; analysis of the demand for automobiles.

Louise Schmir; supervisor, Henry Gleitman, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Swarthmore College; the meanings of reward and punishment as types of information.

Arthur G. Siler; supervisor, Thomas F. McGann, Assistant Professor of History, Harvard University; the economic ideas and policies of the Count of Olivares.

Roslyn L. Siman; supervisors, Donald R. Brown, Assistant Professor of Psychology, and Peter Bachrach, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Bryn Mawr College; the juvenile court and civil rights.

Norman E. Spencer; supervisors, Harold B. Gerard, Assistant Professor of Psychology, and Arnold Meadow, Professor of Psychology, University of Buffalo; prior experience and relative ambiguity of stimuli as determinants of susceptibility to distortion of judgment by social pressure.

ANNOUNCEMENT

GRANTS FOR SLAVIC AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

The Joint Committee on Slavic Studies, established by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, has been enabled by a grant from the Ford Foundation to offer assistance in 1956 and 1957 to scholars engaged in research in the social sciences or the humanities in the field of Slavic and East European studies. This field embraces the area of the U.S.S.R., the Baltic states, Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, Albania, and Yugoslavia.

Funds, administered by the Social Science Research Council, will be available for providing three kinds of assistance to scholars possessing the Ph.D. or its equivalent:

(1) Grants-in-aid will be offered to individuals for research expenses such as travel, typing, photostating and microfilming, and also in a limited number of cases for maintenance for a few months. Particular emphasis will be placed on aid to scholars whose normal place of work is remote from the centers for study of these areas. Applications for grants-in-aid should be prepared on forms supplied by the Social Science Research Council, and filed not later than January 9, 1956. Awards will be announced on or about April 2, 1956.

(2) A small number of grants will be offered to assist the publication of research monographs and other manuscripts that represent the results of research. Grants will be made only for manuscripts that, although accepted by a publishing firm, require a subsidy for publication. Applications from individuals for a subsidy must be accompanied by a letter from a publishing firm, setting forth the amount of the subsidy required. Where feasible, arrangements will be made for repayment for the subsidy through royalties.

(3) Grants will be offered to facilitate the holding of conferences to advance research. Such grants may include funds for such expenses as travel and housing of conference participants, mimeographing and distribution of conference documents, and other administrative costs.

Applications for grants under the program will be reviewed and awards made by a Subcommittee on Grants-in-Aid, of the Joint Committee on Slavic Studies. The members of this subcommittee are: Abram Bergson, Columbia University (chairman); William Ballis, University of Washington; Edward J. Brown, Brown University; Oscar Halecki, Fordham University; and Chauncy D. Harris, University of Chicago. Additional information concerning these three types of grants may be obtained from the Washington office of the Social Science Research Council, 726 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

PUBLICATIONS

COUNCIL SERIES

The Business Enterprise as a Subject for Research, Pamphlet 11, by Howard R. Bowen. Sponsored by the Committee on Business Enterprise Research. May 1955. 111 pp. \$1.25.

The Social Sciences in Historical Study: A Report of the Committee on Historiography, Bulletin 64. July 1954. 191 pp. Paper, \$1.75; cloth, \$2.25.

Research on Labor Mobility: An Appraisal of Research Findings in the United States, Bulletin 65, by Herbert S. Parnes. October 1954. 216 pp. \$1.75.

Labor Mobility in Six Cities, prepared by Gladys L. Palmer, with the assistance of Carol P. Brainerd, for the Committee on Labor Market Research. June 1954. 191 pp. Paper, \$2.25; cloth, \$2.75.

The Council's bulletins, monographs, and pamphlets are distributed from the New York office of the Council.

OTHER BOOKS

American Agriculture: Its Structure and Place in the Economy, by Ronald L. Mighell. Sponsored by the Committee on Census Monographs. New York: John Wiley & Sons, April 1955. 199 pp. Cloth, \$5.00.

Income of the American People, by Herman Miller. Sponsored by the Committee on Census Monographs. New York: John Wiley & Sons, August 1955. About 210 pp. Cloth, \$5.00.

Social Forces in the Middle East: Papers Presented at a Conference Sponsored by the Committee on the Near and Middle East, edited by Sidney N. Fisher. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, September 1955. 298 pp. Cloth, \$5.00.

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL

230 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

Incorporated in the State of Illinois, December 27, 1924, for the purpose of advancing research in the social sciences

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